

Document Name:	Lone Working Policy	
Approved by Board of Trustees on:	13 th May, 2019	
Review Schedule	Every three years	
Next review due	May, 2022	
Owner (Responsibility)	CEO	
Document Description:		
This policy sets out good practice and health and safety guidelines for staff or volunteers working alone.		
Implementation & Quality Assurance		
Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.		
The Policy will be reviewed every three years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.		
All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time.		
Revision History		
Revision date	Summary of Changes	Other Comments

1. Lone Working Policy Statement

- 1.1. Age UK Wiltshire recognises that as an employer it has a duty of care towards its staff and volunteers and that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure their Health, Wellbeing and Personal Safety when engaged in Age UK Wiltshire activity.
- 1.2. Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff or volunteers to work alone, both the individual staff member, volunteer and managers have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.
- 1.3. Where workers are on premises where someone other than their employer has control, their safety is the responsibility of the main occupier of those premises provided that the occupier is also an employer or conducting an undertaking there.
- 1.4. In drawing up this policy, due account has been taken of the following:
 - Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.
- 1.5. A lone worker is anyone who works in isolation from their colleagues without close or direct supervision. Examples include:
 - There is only one person working in a premises
 - Staff or volunteers are working separately from others or outside normal working hours e.g. evenings and weekends
 - Staff or volunteers who work away from the main premises, off-site working, outreach and home visits.

2. Risk Assessment/Control Measures

- 2.1. Age UK Wiltshire will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that staff and volunteers are protected through the process of hazard identification, risk assessment and elimination; or where elimination of the risks is not possible, to reduce the risks to an acceptable level.
- 2.2. Where staff or volunteers are requested to carry out a home visit, a health and safety checklist will first be completed (appendix 1). This will be followed up by more detailed client specific risk assessment (appendix 2)
- 2.3. Risk assessments for fixed-site lone workers will include:
 - Safe access and exit
 - Risk of violence
 - Safety of equipment for individual use
 - Communication systems in an emergency
 - Site security

- Security arrangements i.e. alarm systems and response to personal alarms
- Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision
- Coming into and leaving the premises
- Channels of communication in an emergency
- Sudden illness

2.4. Risk assessment for mobile lone workers must include:

- Client risk assessment where applicable
- Arrangements for home visits or off-site working including consideration of alternatives
- Travelling between appointments
- Isolated areas
- Reporting and recording visits
- Communication and traceability
- Personal safety and security
- Weather hazards

3. Personal Safety

3.1. The employer has the main responsibility for protecting the health and safety of lone workers. However, lone workers also have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care to look after their own health and safety
- Safeguard the health and safety of other people affected by their work
- Cooperate with their employers health and safety procedures
- Use tools or equipment properly, in accordance with relevant safety instructions and training they have been given
- Not misuse equipment provided for their health and safety

4. Incident Reporting

4.1. If staff or volunteers find themselves in a situation which makes them feel unsafe, they should be aware of how to deal with that incident and how to report it appropriately.

4.2. Any incident must be recorded on Charitylog including where staff or volunteers feel threatened or unsafe. A verbal report to line manager in addition to the written record will be made before the end of the working/volunteering day.

5. Induction & Training

5.1. Staff and volunteers will be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe manner and to identify hazards and risks associated with lone working.

- 5.2. Managers must identify the training requirements of their employees during supervision sessions and give employees the opportunity to have input into this process. Managers must then ensure that relevant training courses are identified, and employees have the opportunity to attend.

6. Managers Responsibilities

- 6.1. To identify staff and volunteers who are lone workers, ensure their safety is paramount and implement this policy.
- 6.2. To ensure that a relevant risk assessment is undertaken to highlight foreseeable risks that lone working presents.
- 6.3. To identify control measures, communication systems and training requirements for staff and volunteers who work alone within the confines of the premises, community venues or home visits.
- 6.4. Managers must assess the need for lone working in all cases and must provide alternative arrangements or support when it is unsafe to work alone.
- 6.5. That all new staff and volunteers are aware of the policy and procedures as part of their induction programme.
- 6.6. Managers must ensure that systems are in place for staff to be traced and that these systems are checked and reviewed on a regular basis.

7. Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

- 7.1. To ensure their own personal safety at all times and avoid taking unnecessary risks
- 7.2. To be aware of policies and procedures relating to lone working and to comply with them
- 7.3. To seek the advice of their line manager / other senior managers if there are any doubts or concerns
- 7.4. To comply with the reporting, tracing systems and to inform the appropriate person if they need to make a necessary change
- 7.5. To have with them a mobile phone which can be used to summon help. It is the staff member's or volunteer's responsibility to check the equipment is working, charged and fit for purpose.
- 7.6. Report any concerns or incidents to your line manager and record in the Incident Book as indicated in this policy.

8. Lone Workers Undertaking Home Visits and Traveling - Practical Advice

8.1. Before you go

- Age UK Wiltshire only initiates contact with an individual with their full knowledge and permission.
- Clients will have advance notice of any visit (unless the service manager agrees that this is not necessary).
- The reason for your visit, the client's home circumstances and an assessment of risk and hazards will be provided wherever possible.
- There will be some situations where a service manager has not made an initial visit. You will be told when no initial visit has occurred so that you can be aware that the information you are given may not be comprehensive. Where an initial visit has not been possible, e.g. prior to an I&A visit, the manager will take basic information over the phone, e.g. who lives in the house, any family/neighbours/regular visitors, any pets (especially large dogs), any health and safety hazards, parking
- You should be clear about the limits of your helping relationship following discussion with service co-ordinators, and before visiting. These limits may be different in different circumstances.
- If you anticipate that a home visit may be difficult, then you should talk it over with your manager before going and agree what approach to take.
- If you have reason to be concerned for your own or anyone else's safety, these concerns should be reported to the service co-ordinator as quickly as possible.

8.2. Keeping safe

- Put your own safety first.
- Staff members should always record their home visits in their Outlook diary
- Wherever possible, let someone know where you are going, how long you expect to be and what time you expect to return. If you are likely to be delayed, let someone know.
- If, for any reason, you feel uncertain before entering a property, telephone our office and ask for your manager (or another manager), tell them who you are, give them your mobile number and tell them who you are visiting, where you are and how long you expect to be. Then phone them back after you have finished your visit to report that you are safe. If you are very concerned about the visit for any reason, then don't do it and speak to your manager.
- If, during your visit, you feel uncomfortable for any reason make an excuse and leave (e.g. you've just remembered an urgent call you must make) and follow the above procedure before resuming the visit or aborting it, depending on your judgement of the risk.
- Don't carry unnecessary valuables.
- Always carry your ID card and show it to clients when they come to the door.
- Staff and volunteers should not undertake any structural, electrical or plumbing repairs or jobs on behalf of users, or use power tools, or work from above floor level without suitable steps unless authorised to do so by Age UK Wiltshire.

- No member of staff or volunteer should enter an unoccupied property unaccompanied. If you have had to do this, let your manager know where, when and why (for example, if you must return to a house to collect someone's purse or coat).

9. Escalation Procedure

- 9.1. If a member of staff or volunteer is concerned about their safety during a visit, they must leave immediately. No member of staff or volunteer should be concerned about any perceived awkwardness in this situation – If it doesn't feel right – LEAVE!
- 9.2. Having left the premises in these circumstances, a member of staff or volunteer must ring either the Devizes or Salisbury main office telephone numbers. The person in receipt of this call will notify a manager who will respond to the circumstances immediately which include contacting the police or other emergency service.
- 9.3. If it is necessary to use the escalation procedure out of hours, ring the line manager's mobile. The line manager will then contact the police and CEO.

10. Lone Working within Premises

- 10.1. Staff must come straight into the building, lock the front door behind them and sign in.
- 10.2. Under no circumstances should staff attempt to undertake any dangerous activity e.g. working at height, when lone working
- 10.3. Wherever possible, when meeting a member of the public for the first time in Age UK Wiltshire premises, a second staff member or volunteer should also be present. If this is not possible, let another member of staff know who you are meeting, how long you expect to be with them and tell them when they have left.
- 10.4. If you are working alone in premises and you feel unwell, advise your line manager, lock up and go home.
- 10.5. Lone workers should let family members know the time they are expected home. They should also keep a copy of the organisation's emergency contact details at home so family members can alert them in case of emergency.